

# PRESS RELEASE

June 6, 2002

RE: UNITED STATES v. SALEH MOSAD ABDULLA  
UNITED STATES v. AHMED ALI AHMED  
UNITED STATES v. MOHAMED A. AHMED  
UNITED STATES v. ABDULSALAM A. AHMED  
UNITED STATES v. ABDULLA MOHMED ALHAJ  
UNITED STATES v. AKEEL K. KAID  
UNITED STATES v. ANWAR H. MUFLAHI  
UNITED STATES v. MOHAMED H. MUFLAHI  
UNITED STATES v. HUSSEIN MOHAMMED-AHMED SAEED  
UNITED STATES v. ABDUSSALAM A. SOFIAN  
UNITED STATES v. ERNESTO G. VIRUET

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today the unsealing of eleven Indictments which a federal grand jury had filed charging **SALEH MOSAD ABDULLA**, age 26, from Lackawanna, New York; **AHMED ALI AHMED**, age 69, from Buffalo, New York; **MOHAMED A. AHMED**, age 19, from Buffalo, New York; **ABDULSALAM A. AHMED**, age 21, from Buffalo, New York; **ABDULLA MOHMED ALHAJ**, age 44, from Buffalo, New York; **AKEEL K. KAID**, age 21, from Buffalo, New York; **ANWAR H. MUFLAHI**, age 37, from Buffalo, New York; **MOHAMED H. MUFLAHI**, age 24, from Lackawanna, New York; **HUSSEIN MOHAMMED-AHMED SAEED**, age 27, from Buffalo, New York; **ABDUSSALAM A. SOFIAN**, age 33, from Buffalo, New York; and **ERNESTO G. VIRUET**, age 65, from Buffalo, New York, with Food Stamp Fraud, in violation of 7 U.S.C. § 2024(b). Such charges carry a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment, a fine of \$250,000 or both.

It should be noted that the fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime ... is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. (Disciplinary Rule 7-107(B)(6)).

Assistant United States Attorney MaryEllen Kresse, who presented evidence to the grand jury, stated that each Indictment charges each defendant with having unlawfully accepted and acquired food stamp benefits in exchange for cash, while working at various small food stores in the Buffalo area.

The Indictments were the culmination of an undercover investigation by the United States Department of Agriculture – Office of Inspector General, the Erie County Sheriff's Office, and the New York State Police, CNET, to investigate alleged food stamp fraud in Buffalo, New York, grocery stores.

In addition to these Indictments, criminal complaints were filed against five other employees of Buffalo-area food stores, alleging that they also unlawfully accepted and acquired Food Stamp benefits in exchange for cash. These individuals are **HAIDER J.**

**AL-SULTANI**, age 27; **AMIN M. ALSAIDI**, age 42; **MUTEE HEZAM NAGI**, age 24; **ABDULIZZEZ NASR**, age 27; and **KAID K. NASSAR**, age 47, all from Buffalo, New York.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the Direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter Ahearn, the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, under the direction of Director M. Frances Holmes, the New York State Department of Tax and Finance and the United States Coast Guard Investigative Service also assisted in this investigation.

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